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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 003138

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EB/ESC/TFS (GLASS/SALOOM), IO/PHO, L/EB; TREASURY
FOR ROSS, WALLWORTH WEISS & ZARATE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/01/2014

TAGS: [EFIN](#) [IZ](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#) [XL](#)

SUBJECT: IRAQI ASSETS: TURKISH GOVERNMENT CLAIMS NONE EXIST

REF: A. STATE 110075

[B](#). STATE 36435

[C](#). 03 STATE 346682

[D](#). ANKARA 1087

Classified by DCM Robert S. Deutsch. Reasons: 1.4(b), (d).

[1](#). (SBU) On 26 May, DCM met with MFA Director General for Bilateral Political Affairs (Middle East & Africa) Taksin Burcuoglu to press for a response to Refs B & C. Burcuoglu replied that "until now Turkey has been unable to find" the bank accounts. Burcuoglu further stated that the situation is difficult because some banks no longer exist and some were privatized, but that research was continuing.

[2](#). (SBU) On 1 June Econoffs met with Akif Ayhan, MFA Head of Department for Middle Eastern and African Affairs, to deliver Ref A demarche and continue to press for a response to Refs B and C. (Since January and February, when Econoffs delivered Refs B and C, Ayhan has repeatedly fended off Post's meeting requests, on the grounds that he had nothing to report.) In the 1 June meeting, Ayhan orally stated, with respect to Refs B and C, that "No tangible data have been found which allows us to say there are any such Iraqi assets in Turkey," and that "nothing affiliated with any of the indicated persons" has been found. Ayhan emphasized that this was the official GOT response, and that all agencies of the government were involved in the research. Ayhan noted, however, that the search did not include periods prior to the first Gulf War.

[3](#). (C) In a follow-up telephone call on June 4, Econoff asked Ayhan whether GOT could at least confirm the existence of the subject accounts. Ayhan refused directly to answer the question, repeating his "no data" statement, and refused further to specify which agencies conducted the investigation. Finally, Ayhan advised that GOT considered this matter closed and would not be conducting any additional investigations. Comment: Post is troubled by Ayhan's belated and formulaic response and inability or unwillingness to provide any details as to the nature and results of the investigation conducted by GOT (e.g., whether the subject accounts in fact exist). Post accordingly intends to elevate this issue again. End Comment.

[4](#). (SBU) Regarding Ref A, Ayhan stated that he would distribute the lists to all relevant GOT agencies for review.
EDELMAN